

## Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

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FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 5781

S E C R E T GENEVA 7035

NODIS

FOR ATHERTON FROM SAUNDERS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, EG, IS, US

SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN REQUEST FOR US INTERCESSION AT GENEVA TALKS

REF: CAIRO 9092, STATE 218806

1. MY REPORT ON SESSIONS 6-10 OF MILITARY WORKING GROUP JUST SENT (GENEVA 7034) PROVIDES GENERAL BACKGROUND FOR CONSIDERING FAHMY'S SPECIFIC REQUEST RELAYED IN CAIRO 9092.

2. AS NOTED IN THAT TELEGRAM, I CAN WELL SEE US FACING DECISION BY MID-WEEK WHETHER TO TRY TO BREAK IMPASSE ON KEY ISSUES HERE. QUESTION TODAY IS HOW TO RESPOND TO FAHMY'S SPECIFIC REQUEST, WHICH IS NOT YET A KEY ISSUE HERE.

3. FIRST, THE FACTS: FRIDAY NIGHT AT DINNER OSMAN HAD FOR EGYPTIAN DELEGATION, UN OFFICERS AND ME, I HEARD FROM EGYPTIANS FIRST MENTION THAT ABU RODEIS OIL FIELDS DEPEND FOR THEIR OPERATION ON SOURCE OF WATER 12 KILOMETERS EAST OF LINE M. I SAID I HAD NOT KNOWN THIS BEFORE, AND WE BOTH AGREED IT WAS UNFORTUNATE THIS FACT HAD NOT BEEN BROUGHT TO LIGHT EARLIER. THIS IS PROBABLY GENESIS OF AL-BAZ'S COMMENT THAT "AMERICAN SOURCES" CONFIDED TO EGYPTIAN DELEGATION THAT ISRAELIS APPARENTLY KNEW ABOUT THESE WATER WELLS BUT WITHHELD INFORMATION. FRANKLY, I WAS THINKING TO MYSELF THAT THIS IS KIND OF THING GOOD EGYPTIAN STAFF WORK WOULD HAVE SURFACED

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EARLIER. IN ANY CASE, EGYPTIANS -- ESPECIALLY OWAIDY --

WERE EXERCISED OVER ASSUMPTION THAT ISRAELIS WOULD PROBABLY DENY THEM THIS SOURCE OF WATER OR EXACT SOME PRICE FOR IT. TO MY KNOWLEDGE AND SIILASVUO'S, HOWEVER, SUBJECT HAS NOT BEEN MENTIONED TO ISRAELIS YET, AND I THINK IT UNWISE FOR ME TO RAISE IT WITH THEM. TALKS BETWEEN OIL EXPERTS ARE SCHEDULED TO BEGIN TUESDAY, AND THIS SUBJECT WILL PRESUMABLY BE RAISED THEN. THEREFORE, UNLESS THERE HAS BEEN A DIRECT EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI EXCHANGE ON THIS SUBJECT THAT SIILASVUO IS NOT AWARE OF, THERE IS PROBABLY SOME MISUNDERSTANDING IN CAIRO WHEN AL-BAZ SAYS ISRAELIS ARE ALREADY REFUSING TO PERMIT EGYPTIAN ACCESS TO WATER SOURCE. THEY MAY, BUT AS FAR AS I KNOW, THEY HAVE NOT DONE SO YET BECAUSE, AS FAR AS I CAN TELL, SUBJECT NOT YET RAISED WITH THEM.

4. MY RECOMMENDATION IS THAT HERMANN TELL FAHMY SOMETHING LIKE FOLLOWING:

A. EGYPTIAN DELEGATION HAS DESCRIBED THIS ISSUE TO SAUNDERS, BUT AS WE UNDERSTAND IT, TALKS ON OIL TRANSFER ARE ON GENEVA AGENDA FOR TUESDAY. TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, QUESTIONS SUCH AS WATER SOURCE AND ALL OTHER TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF TRANSFER HAVE BEEN DEFERRED UNTIL EACH DELEGATION COULD CONSULT EXPERTS IT HAS SENT TO GENEVA FOR THIS PURPOSE.

B. SECRETARY IS FOLLOWING GENERAL COURSE OF GENEVA TALKS CLOSELY AND WILL REVIEW WITH AMBASSADOR DINITZ. ON THIS PARTICULAR ISSUE, HOWEVER, WE ARE INCLINED TO ALLOW TIME FOR SOLUTION IN TECHNICAL TALKS WHEN IT APPEARS ON AGENDA RATHER THAN MAKING ISSUE OF IT WITH ISRAELIS IN ADVANCE.

5. IN SHORT, I THINK EGYPTIANS IN CAIRO ARE REACTING TO WRONG ISSUE ON BASIS MISUNDERSTANDING. WHEN THEY REFLECT, THEY MAY WELL REQUEST US INTERCESSION ON MUCH BROADER BASIS THAN ISSUE LIKE THIS ONE.

6. THIS LEADS TO QUESTION, HOWEVER, WHETHER SECRETARY SHOULD SAY ANYTHING TO DINITZ BEFORE TUESDAY SINCE TUESDAY WILL BE DAY OF TESTING WHETHER IT POSSIBLE TO BREAK IMPASSE ON MAJOR ISSUE OF OVERALL PHASING OF REDEPLOYMENT. UNHAPPY FACT IS THAT ISRAELIS, APPARENTLY FOR POLITICAL REASONS, INTEND TO INSIST  
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ON DENYING EGYPTIAN MOVE IN NORTH UNTIL EARLY FEBRUARY DESPITE FACT THAT THERE IS ROOM IN PRESENT ISRAELI LIMITED AREA EAST OF LINE B THAT UNEF COULD MOVE INTO.. SAD POINT IS THAT EGYPTIANS WILL MAKE THAT MOVE WITHIN FIVE MONTHS IN ANY CASE, AND ONLY ISSUE IS WHETHER MOVE IS MADE IN SUCH WAY AS TO MAKE AGREEMENT STEPPING-STONE TO BETTER RELATIONSHIP OR CAUSE FOR FURTHER BITTERNESS.

7. I AM NOT SURE MUCH CAN OR SHOULD BE DONE ON THIS ISSUE DURING YOM KIPPUR HOLIDAY WHICH IS ABOUT TO BEGIN IN ISRAEL. IT MAY BE BEST TO WAIT AND SEE WHAT ISRAELIS COME UP WITH TUESDAY. ALTERNATIVE IS TO CALL DINITZ EARLY SUNDAY AFTERNOON AND SAY SIMPLY THE FOLLOWING: BOTH GAMASY AND FAHMY HAVE HAD REPORTS FROM GENEVA THAT ISRAEL IS MAKING IT DIFFICULT TO DEVELOP PLAN FOR STEADILY PHASED IMPLEMENTATION OF AGREEMENT. MUCH OF THE POLITICAL BENEFIT FROM AGREEMENT FOR ISRAEL AS WELL AS EGYPT WILL DEPEND ON HOW IT IS IMPLEMENTED. WE URGE ISRAELIS TO TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT PHASING, ESPECIALLY IN NORTHERN AREA, SO SADAT CAN POINT TO STEADY MOVEMENT. SINCE THIS IS MATTER OF EGYPT MOVING INTO PRESENT BUFFER ZONE AND ISRAELIS HAVE LITTLE IN THEIR OWN LIMITED FORCES AREA, IT SHOULD BE FEASIBLE.

8. DEPARTMENT PLEASE REPEAT TO CAIRO AND TEL AVIV FOR OPENING OF BUSINESS MONDAY. DALE

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## Message Attributes

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**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** CunninFX  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
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**Reference:** 75 CAIRO 9092, 75 STATE 218806  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** CunninFX  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 19 JUN 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <19 JUN 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <07 NOV 2003 by CunninFX>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
06 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** LOCK1  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** EGYPTIAN REQUEST FOR US INTERCESSION AT GENEVA TALKS  
**TAGS:** PFOR, EG, IS, US  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006